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ANNEX 1

to the Commission Implementing Decision on the financing of the annual action plan 2023 in favour of the Republic of Liberia

Action Document for ‘From productivity to product, linking peers to peers (P2P)’

ANNUAL PLAN

This document constitutes the annual work programme within the meaning of Article 110(2) of the Financial Regulation, and action plans within the meaning of Article 23(2) of the NDICI-Global Europe Regulation.

1 SYNOPSIS

1.1 Action Summary Table

1. Title CRIS/OPSYS business reference Basic Act	From productivity to product, linking peers to peers (P2P) OPSYS reference: ACT-61595 Financed under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (<u>NDICI-Global Europe</u>)
2. Team Europe Initiative	Yes: contribution to Team Europe initiative for Liberia ‘ <i>Safe and sustainable food systems</i> ’ (TEI SSFSs) with the participation of France, Sweden and Ireland (overall contributions to be confirmed)
3. Zone benefiting from the action	The action shall be carried out in Liberia.
4. Programming document	Multiannual Indicative Plan (MIP) 2021-2027 for Liberia
5. Link with relevant MIP objectives / expected results	MIP objectives 1.1 ‘Ensure sustainable agri-food systems to increase access to affordable and nutritious food’ and 1.2 ‘Ensure the effective governance of terrestrial, coastal and marine ecosystems and biodiversity hot spots’; and expected results 1.1.a, 1.1.b, 1.1.c and 1.2.a. MIP objectives 2.1 ‘Enable youth to respond to economic growth opportunities that increase employability and entrepreneurship potential’ and 2.2 ‘Increase decent jobs, formal employment and value addition through private sector development in the value chains of agriculture, fisheries and forestry’; and expected results 2.1.a, 2.1.b and 2.2.a, 2.2.b.
PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION	
6. Priority Area(s), sectors	Priority area 1: Enhancing and preserving natural resources for sustainable growth ¹ (310) Agriculture, forestry and fisheries (food and nutrition security, food safety, resources management)

¹ Specific objective 1: Ensure sustainable agri-food systems to increase access to affordable and nutritious food: R1.1.a-c; Specific objective 2: Ensure the effective governance of terrestrial, coastal and marine ecosystems and biodiversity hot spots: R1.2.a.

	<p>Priority area 2: Promoting decent jobs and inclusive growth²</p> <p>(321) SME development (processing of food and industrial crops, business environment, innovation)</p> <p>In addition to being in line with priority areas 1 and 2, this Action contributes indirectly to priority area 3 (Improving financial and democratic governance).</p>			
7. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	<p>Main SDG: 2 – End hunger</p> <p>Other significant SDGs: 17 – Partnership for the goals, 8 – Decent work and economic growth, 13 – Climate action, 14 – Life below water, 15 – Life on land, 5 – Gender Equality, 10 – Reduced inequalities and 16 – Peace, Justice, and strong institutions</p>			
8 a) DAC code(s)	<p>(31120) Agricultural development – 45%</p> <p>(31320) – Fishery development – 25%</p> <p>(32130) – SME development – 30%</p>			
8 b) Main Delivery Channel	<p>41100: 41123 –United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO)</p> <p>51000: 47062 – International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA)</p> <p>51000: 47101 – Africa Rice Centre (WARDA)</p> <p>60000 – Private sector institution</p>			
9. Targets	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Migration</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Climate</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social inclusion and Human Development</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Education</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Human Rights, Democracy and Governance</p>			
10. Markers (from DAC form)	General policy objective	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Aid to environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Gender equality and women’s and girl’s empowerment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Trade development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reproductive, maternal, new-born and child health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Disaster Risk Reduction	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Inclusion of persons with disabilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Nutrition	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	RIO Convention markers	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Biological diversity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Combat desertification	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change mitigation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

² Specific objective 1: Enable youth to respond to economic growth opportunities that increase employability and entrepreneurship potential: R2.1.a-b; Specific objective 2: Increase decent jobs, formal employment and value addition through private sector development in the value chains of agriculture, fisheries and forestry: R2.2.a-b.

	Climate change adaptation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Internal markers and Tags	Policy objectives	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Digitalisation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	digital connectivity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	/
	digital governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	digital entrepreneurship	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	digital skills/literacy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	digital services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Connectivity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
digital connectivity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	/	
energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
transport	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
education and research	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Migration (methodology for tagging under development)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Reduction of Inequalities (methodology for marker and tagging under development)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Covid-19	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
BUDGET INFORMATION				
12. Amounts concerned	<p>Budget line(s) (article, item): BGUE-B2023-14.020120-C1-INTPA</p> <p>Total estimated cost: EUR 22 000 000</p> <p>Total amount of EU budget contribution: EUR 22 000 000</p> <p>This action is part of the TEI on SSFSs with the participation of France, Sweden and Ireland (overall contributions to be confirmed). An additional EUR 40 000 000 (European Investment Bank (EIB), France and EU (European Development Fund, African Investment Platform) blending is potentially in the pipeline.</p>			
MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION				
13. Type of financing	<p>Direct management through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grants - Procurement <p>Indirect management with the entity to be selected in accordance with the criteria set out in Section 4.4.3</p>			

1.2 Summary of the Action

This Action is the first in a series contributing to transformative impact targeted under the Team Europe initiative ‘Safe and sustainable food systems’ (TEI SSFSs). It ties in with all priority areas of the MIP for Liberia, fully aligns with SDG 2, End hunger, and will contribute to SDGs 17, 8, 13, 14, 15, 5, 10 and 16.

Its overall objective (impact) is **to boost safe and sustainable food systems growth for enhanced food and nutrition security**. To achieve this objective, the Action will build on the EU’s ongoing investments in Liberia’s food systems while emphasising a clear paradigm shift from a one-size-fits-all to a needs-based value chain approach. The Action projects that, **if** improving governance is prioritised with a knowledge-based approach, **if** the linkages in the food systems value chains are activated with a strong focus on healthy, nutritious and affordable diets as well as service development and business attitude, and **if** innovation is supported through ecosystem- and climate-smart activities inclusive of women and youth, **then** food systems in Liberia will grow in a safe and sustainable manner. The food and nutrition security in Liberia will **therefore** be improved.

The Action will seek to support public entities (duty-bearers) with key mandates in food systems development, notably the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), the Liberia Agriculture Commodity Regulatory Authority (LACRA) and the National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority (NaFAA), along with private sector partners, notably micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), to improve their service delivery on a sustainable basis, and interact with organisations representing the diverse right-holders’ voices in all 15 counties of Liberia.

The Action will contain interventions focusing on soil and water resources suitability mapping, seed production and certification, as well as food safety (serving domestic and export markets). Natural resources (incl. climate) concerns are thus directly addressed, while gender and youth as well as tertiary education considerations will be integrated in thematic and technical assistance programmes implemented through service procurement (technical assistance) and grants (under direct and indirect management).

The Action will also contribute to the realisation of the EU Gender Action Plan 2021-2025 (GAP III)³, notably to its thematic areas of engagement ‘Strengthening economic social rights and empowering girls and women’ and ‘Addressing the challenges and harnessing the opportunities offered by the green transition’. It will also provide opportunities to deliver on the EU’s ambitions under its Youth Action Plan 2022-27⁴, particularly under its ‘Partnership to empower’ and ‘Partnership to connect’ objectives, which touch upon education and access to economic opportunities.

2 RATIONALE

2.1 Context

Liberia is a least developed country in the Gulf of Guinea with a fragile economy and a weak governance structure. In the last 20 years, it has experienced a number of shocks (civil war, Ebola, COVID-19) which have further eroded the ability of the central Government to deliver services to its people. In addition, poor governance is adding to the fragility of the central Government, which has a severe lack of capacity to develop and implement policies. The economy is based on a limited number of commodities either through extraction (iron, gold) or plantations (rubber, palm oil) and therefore subject to extreme shocks on the international markets. Poor economic governance at the start of the current administration resulted in high inflation and the Government was forced to ask the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for support. Since the signature of the programme with the IMF in late 2019, there are signs of a more stable macroeconomic environment. This is partly due to rising commodity prices, already before, but accelerating with Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine, which will increase the, at this stage positive, impact for the Liberian economy.

The Government is heavily dependent on the support of Development Partners (DPs). Programmes funded by DPs often step in where the Government fails in its service delivery to the population. This is an unfortunate circumstance that was triggered by the civil war and cannot be abandoned in the short run without severe impact on the already precarious situation of the majority of the population and the social fabric of Liberia.

³ SWD(2020) 284 final.

⁴ JOIN(2022) 53 final

EU support continues to be relevant. Every single sector in the country has urgent development needs and in the MIP for Liberia, the objective of which is to have a meaningful sustainable impact on the lives of as many Liberians as possible, the EU has chosen to focus on strategically important sectors for Liberia as well as for the EU political agenda. The two TEIs ‘Safe and Sustainable Food Systems’ and ‘Forestry and Biodiversity’ reflect these strategic choices and have been undisputed priorities for the EU and the Member States. Both TEIs are essential to deliver on the European Green Agenda, while food systems are also high on the domestic Liberian agenda. Both TEIs have also been identified in the national policy strategy, the Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD, 2018-2023), and are equally important for the EU’s policy agenda, in particular the European Green Deal⁵. Working in tandem, the TEIs aim at boosting Liberia’s economic transformation and growth anchored in ecosystem conservation, sustainable forest management, and safe and sustainable food systems development. Both TEIs will also contribute to support Liberian stakeholders to adapt to new requirements of the EU Regulation on the making available on the Union market of certain commodities and products associated with deforestation and forest degradation (EU Deforestation Regulation) in as far as this regulation is relevant for the value chains concerned⁶.

The TEI on Forestry and Biodiversity joins natural resources management and conservation to the opportunity of improving the quality of life and green development for local communities. The Liberian context with its specificities makes Liberia a unique candidate to implement an ambitious and holistic forestry and biodiversity programme centred on its vast natural capital. It hosts remarkable tracts of a very specific type of rainforest, has a low population density, low labour costs and low opportunity cost for investments.

Following the Liberia country assessment, the European Green Deal, the EU’s standing partnership with the African Union⁷, and the COVID-19 crisis causing global (food) supply chain disruptions among others, food systems have emerged as an undeniable intervention priority. The cascading effects of Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine, with food and oil prices hitting highs globally and major food-producing countries imposing export bans to safeguard their own food security, further exacerbate such disruptions, which equally disrupt regional trade integration efforts^{8,9}. With Liberia being a highly food-import dependent country (see 2.2), the Liberian authorities are heightening their focus on food self-sufficiency. SSFSs, already at the heart of Liberia’s development agenda, have thus taken further centre stage: smart management of the natural environment will help the nation to produce more food; increased value addition and trade in agriculture and fisheries will create meaningful jobs for youth and women as well as generate (public) revenue; domestic consumption of safe and nutritious food will serve a healthy and more resilient society.

This Action is the EU’s first contribution to the TEI SSFSs, one of two Team Europe flagships in Liberia. It is aligned to relevant EU policies, other programmes and instruments, including the Farm to Fork strategy underpinning the European Green Deal, the EU’s standing partnership with the African Union, as well as the EU trade agreements and fair trade policies. By focussing on environment-friendly food systems and tapping into Liberia’s green economy potential from farm to fork, it positions the EU to lead the way towards a Global Circular Economy. By emphasising training and decent jobs for youth and women, the interventions also seek to support Liberia’s transformation towards an inclusive green economy. Where feasible, the actions of the Erasmus+ programme for Capacity Building in the fields of Higher Education and of Vocational Education and Training will be promoted to strengthen the capacities of the relevant education and training institutions and administrations through international cooperation.

This Action equally creates a unique opportunity for the EU to turn its commitments under the EU-Africa Global Gateway Investment Package on Sustainable Food Systems, notably its ambition to accelerate the sustainable transformation of African food systems in support of Africa’s agriculture, fisheries and food development agenda, into a reality. Finally, this Action is also aligned with SDG 2, End hunger, and will contribute to SDGs 5, 8, 10, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17.

⁵ COM(2019) 640 final.

⁶ <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-16298-2022-INIT/en/pdf>

⁷ Particularly, the EU’s intention to support the African Union in its implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) and the joint Commission-EEAS Communication “Towards a comprehensive Strategy with Africa” (JOIN(2020) 4 final, 09.03.2020).

⁸ [UN, 2022. Global impact of war in Ukraine on food, energy and finance systems. Brief no. 1.](#)

⁹ ECOWAS-FAO-WFP, 2022. Assessment of the Risks and Impact of the Russian-Ukrainian Crisis on Food Security in the ECOWAS Region, Key Findings.

2.2 Problem Analysis

Short problem analysis

Through this Action, the EU addresses gaps that are consistent across Liberia's food systems/value chains in a national context that is not conducive to business development and highly vulnerable to climate change.

For its food provision, Liberia is heavily import-dependent: the most recent comprehensive household income and expenditure survey indicated that about 82% of all food consumed was not produced domestically¹⁰, while Liberia imported 65% of its main staple (rice)¹¹ – confirmed by more recent assessments according to which imports account for more than half of Liberia's total cereal requirements¹². Agriculture and fisheries have contributed around 30% to real GDP (mostly from the rubber sector) in recent years¹³; low levels of sector outputs still indicate the prevalence of subsistence farming in Liberia. The average household sources 81% of its food from local markets, with just 11% coming from own production¹⁴.

Further, about half of the population lives below the poverty line and faces regular food shortages. Nearly one in three children under five are stunted and more than two in three children as well as almost one in two women suffer from anaemia¹⁵. Malnutrition is related to the high number of adolescent pregnancies, and is also directly associated with wealth inequalities, poor water and sanitation practices and inadequate diets. Only 3% of children aged 6-23 months were fed a minimum acceptable diet. Furthermore, there is an increasing prevalence of overweight and obesity amongst women, indicative of a poor diet – also reflected in low protein intake¹⁶.

Almost 80% of Liberians are younger than 35. About four fifths of Liberians earn a living in the informal sector. Liberia ranks 78th out of 146 countries in the World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap report 2022¹⁷; additional efforts on gender equality are needed, notably in the economic participation sphere. Even though women's employment in agriculture has decreased over the past decade, their participation has decreased at a slower pace than that of men¹⁸, resulting in women still contributing the majority of the labour, marketing and trading as well as food crop production force in the agriculture sector. More than 80% of women in agriculture are self-employed or employed by a family member, and 57% are not paid for their work, thus engaged in vulnerable employment¹⁹. Across the economy, inequalities persist, and women's work is mainly concentrated in the informal economy, where their share reaches 74%²⁰.

Liberia aims to become a middle-income country by 2030 through inclusive and sustainable growth, while pursuing the attainment of the SDGs (Vision 2030)²¹. The Government, within the framework of its PAPD Pillar Two on 'Economy & Jobs', sees an opportunity to create employment from agriculture and fisheries by ensuring that food production systems are resilient and sustainable.

In formulating different generations of the Liberia Agricultural Sector Investment Plan (LASIP), MoA has led the process of outlining priorities for the sectors concerned in accordance with the global, continental and regional (agricultural) development agendas²². Nevertheless, despite the alignment processes that are in place, there is

¹⁰ as share to total household food consumption expenditure; [Liberia Household Income and Expenditure Survey \(HIES\) 2016](#)

¹¹ [Comprehensive Food Security and Nutrition Survey, 2018, Liberia](#)

¹² [GIEWS - Global Information and Early Warning System, Liberia, May 2021](#)

¹³ [Central Bank of Liberia Annual Report 2021](#)

¹⁴ [Comprehensive Food Security and Nutrition Survey, 2018, Liberia](#). More recent, yet less comprehensive, data indicate 74% reliance on markets, 21% on own production and 5% on other sources (unpublished MoA-WFP rapid FS assessment, Oct 2020).

¹⁵ [Liberia Demographic & Health Survey 2019-2020](#)

¹⁶ In 2021, 27.6% and 27.3% of rural and urban respondents, respectively, reported no consumption of either high-protein foods or vitamin A-rich foods (e.g. eggs, dairy), and only 4.6% and 7.9% reported daily consumption of both groups (unpublished Liberian Food Security and Post-Harvest Snapshot Assessment, Spring 2021). As an illustration, fish consumption in Liberia was around 5 kg fish/person and year, compared to close to 15 kg in the ECOWAS region, and more than 20 kg globally (all 2017 data/estimates) ([Statistical Factsheets of the ECOWAS Member countries, Jan 2020](#)). Only 26% of households own livestock (unpublished MoA-WFP rapid FS assessment, Oct 2020).

¹⁷ https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2022.pdf

¹⁸ [UN Women, 2021. Liberia, Country Gender Equality Profile, August 2021.](#)

¹⁹ [UN Women, 2021. Liberia, Country Gender Equality Profile, August 2021.](#)

²⁰ [Council on Foreign Relations \(2021\). Liberia's significant strides on women's rights have not translated to workplace equality.](#)

²¹ [Liberia Vision 2030](#)

²² LASIP II (2018-2022) still to be formally endorsed by Cabinet, yet in line with the AU's Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme, Africa's policy framework for agricultural transformation (CAADP; Assembly/AU/Decl.7 (II))

inadequate ongoing engagement between the various institutions at national level, resulting in poor coordination. As a result, a majority of stakeholders, particularly in the private sector, do not recognise the current LASIP II. Dedicated thematic or sub-sector policies and strategies suffer from similar coordination flaws and are hardly implemented. Further, Government of Liberia institutions with mandates in food systems do have insufficient or irregular knowledge generation to base their policy decisions and subsequent prioritisation and cost-effective planning on.

Before the civil war, Liberia's government invested considerably in agriculture and fisheries development and was also successful in attracting private resources. Over the past years though, Liberia's national budget allocation to agriculture and fisheries has hovered around 1-1.5 % of the total budget, without evidence of disbursements to the sector beyond salaries. Based on the calendar year 2022 draft national budget, agriculture (in a broad sense) is expected to receive 3.1% of the total public resource envelope – including on-budget and off-budget (project loans and grants) allocations²³. Donors and their implementing partners further complete the spectrum of public investment in food systems. Some food sub-sectors, such as oil palm or fisheries, to a lesser degree rice and cocoa, have benefited from private sector (as in profit-making) investment. However, these commercial operations often run in isolation from, or at best, coexist with smallholders' low-input/low-output cultivation, creating a duality that has been identified as a major contributing factor to conflicts in the country²⁴. Tapping into private funding in general has remained largely uncharted territory since Liberia emerged from its decade-long unrest/conflict period.

The low level of public and private investments translates into absence of (small) machinery to work the land, lack of irrigation or water control, low access to quality farming inputs, advisory and extension services, with high dependency of production systems on climate variability and change, resulting in low production and productivity. Access to land and secure tenure rights are also issues that hamper investment in agriculture. The implementation of the 2018 Land Rights Act remains work in progress. Farmers rely on labour-intensive systems and often practice slash-and-burn shifting cultivation (as opposed to slash-and-mulch), or other methods that disregard the changing climate they are subject to and the ecosystem functions they could benefit from (e.g. carbon sequestration, nutrient recycling, temperature and moisture regulation). The labour-intensive nature of farming systems in Liberia makes affordability of labour and access to inputs even more critical for nationwide food production. Lack of information on land use and land use mapping hampers the ability of the government to develop climate- and ecosystem-sensitive policies and implement climate- and ecosystem-smart agriculture practices.

Inadequate and unreliable infrastructure (roads, storage and processing facilities, as well as electricity/power supply and internet connectivity) caused by weathering climatic conditions hampers access to markets and thus the buying and selling of inputs and outputs; these conditions, in addition to poor food safety and handling practices, also result in high post-harvest losses and hamper value-addition activities. As a consequence, income-earning opportunities are undermined and food security is low. At the local level, farmer- and community-based organisations have limited organisational capacities that limit their opportunities to deal with the impact of climate change and improve their living standards.

Value chain development (cash & staple crops, fish) has been hampered by low levels of skills and entrepreneurship, limited access to inputs and advisory and extension services²⁵, restricted finance for investments and business development services across the chain, absence and weak organisation of essential value chain actors (incl. producers) and disrupted connections between value chain processes, poorly informed policy making with under-resourced implementation, restrictive private sector policies, limited infrastructure (roads and energy) as well as porous international borders (with food produce and products crossing borders informally). Liberia is keen to export agriculture and fishery products to the EU market²⁶, yet its infrastructure for and organisation of food quality and safety are not integrated across the value chain (from producer to consumer) and not yet up to the existing and future regulatory requirements of the EU market.

Therefore, the ambitious goals mentioned above require a structural transformation of the economy, in which the development of safe and sustainable food systems can play that strategic, transformational role. Through this Action, the EU addresses gaps that are consistent across Liberia's food systems/value chains. Therefore, the EU

²³ World Bank Group, 2021. Unpacking Liberia's 2022 Budget.

²⁴ [MoA, FAO, IFAD, The World Bank, 2007. Comprehensive Assessment of The Agriculture Sector in Liberia \(CAAS-Lib\) Volume 1 - Synthesis report.](#)

²⁵ Few Liberian farmers report using improved seeds (4.7%) or improved farming practices (3.2%) (unpublished MoA-WFP rapid FS assessment, Oct 2020). Less than 5% of Liberian farmers have access to extension services ([HIES, 2016](#)).

²⁶ Liberia could export to the EU under the Everything but Arms (EBA) arrangement for least developed countries.

will seek to strategically inject resources into those areas that are considered public responsibility in food systems (most notably under MoA, LACRA and NaFAA mandates), and are needed to attract private investment: land planning, seed systems and food safety. With this Action – with a heightened emphasis on food and nutrition security and food sovereignty²⁷ – the EU will also build on existing investments for Liberia’s economic development, while at the same time creating additional interest for European companies to invest and build partnerships with Liberia. This intervention will further support access for Liberia to the European market for selective crops and fisheries products, and creates a unique opportunity for the EU to make its commitments under the Global Gateway a reality. It will raise awareness about the requirements of the EU Deforestation Regulation in as far as selected ‘type’ food value chains (see section 3.2) are concerned by this regulation. Finally, this Action also seeks a paradigm shift from a one-size-fits-all to a needs-based value chain approach.

In preparation of the TEI SSFSs’ full roll-out, the EU is already supporting MoA in having a strategy and plan for climate- and ecosystem-smart food systems growth. The different generations of EU contributions to the TEI SSFSs (EU Actions) fit within the intervention logic of the TEI SSFSs (agreed with TEI partners) as well as this overarching MoA programme.

Identification of main stakeholders and corresponding institutional and/or organisational issues (mandates, potential roles, and capacities) to be covered by the action

The main stakeholders to this Action will be:

- Government of Liberia counterparts: MoA, LACRA and NaFAA as regards direct technical assistance (TA); MoA, LACRA and NaFAA in relation to food market information systems; MoA, NaFAA, LACRA, and indirectly the Liberia Land Authority (LLA) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in relation to soil and water resources mapping and suitability assessment; MoA, the Central Agricultural Research Institute (CARI) and NaFAA in relation to seed production and certification systems; MoA, NaFAA, LACRA and Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI)/National Standards Laboratory (NSL)²⁸ in relation to food safety;
- Tertiary education institutions in relation to tertiary education support (via TA to Government of Liberia entities);
- Smallholder farmers, youth and women’s groups and cooperatives, and private food businesses, particularly (M)SMEs, in relation to the seed production and certification systems and food safety interventions roll-out;
- Organisations representing the diverse right-holders’ voices (women, youth, persons with disabilities)
- Engagement with local authorities (county and lower administrative levels) will be essential to successful implementation of the interventions proposed, all requiring tailoring to local conditions. The interventions on seed production and certification, as well as food safety, will engage with communities, and potentially through civil society implementing partners;
- All the above partners in relation to nutrition-sensitive as well as climate- and ecosystem-smart transformation of food systems.

3 DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

3.1 Objectives and Expected Outputs

The **Overall Objective (Impact)** of this Action is to **enhance food and nutrition security**.

The **Specific Objectives (Outcomes)** of this Action are to:

1. improve food systems knowledge, regulatory environment and governance
2. increase inclusive food value chains performance and market opportunities (staple & cash crops, fish)²⁹.

The **Outputs** to be delivered by this Action contributing to the corresponding Specific Objectives (Outcomes) are:

²⁷ See also [European Parliament resolution of 6 July 2022 on addressing food security in developing countries \(2021/2208\(INI\)\)](#)

²⁸ To become the Liberia Standards Authority when the signed “An Act to Amend the Executive Law of Liberia and to Establish the Liberia Standards Authority” is printed in handbills.

²⁹ Specific value chains to be selected at intervention/project/contract stage, (i) with nutrition sensitivity as prime selection criterion for domestic markets, highlighting the importance of value chains being relevant to achieving healthier and more nutritious diets as well as enhanced livelihoods and a stronger economy anchored in safe and sustainable food systems; (ii) and competitive/comparative advantage for export markets. For the latter (export commodities), food value chains that contribute to deforestation and that will be affected by the EU Deforestation Regulation will be used as additional selection criterion.

- 1.1 improved land³⁰ and market knowledge for planning and decision-making
- 1.2 laws and regulations related to establishing a viable seed sector are developed/ revised/ implemented
- 1.3 improved infrastructure and capacity of stakeholders for providing quality infrastructure services in food value chains
- 2.1 enhanced producers' access to quality seeds³¹/cuttings, related inputs & services for food value chains
- 2.2 enhanced processes for food safety across food value chains
- 2.3 improved mechanisms for matching tertiary education and (private sector) job market demand in food value chains.

This Action is designed such that it fully contributes to the overall and specific objective(s) of the TEI SSFSs. The EU has ongoing interventions in the cassava, rice, horticulture, fish (aquaculture and coastal), cocoa and coffee value chains and supports capacity strengthening of the actors involved (2014-2020 11th European Development Fund (EDF) and budget funding: EUR 33 000 000). Action 'Youth Rising 2', equally under this AAP, will contribute to an improved match between technical and vocational education and training (TVET) offered and (private sector) job market demand in food value chains. In a similar vein, the Agence Française de Développement AFD financed Strengthening Integration through Vocational Education (STRIVE) project (EUR 10 800 000) will complement this Action through TVET in the market gardening and fish farming sub-sectors. If approved by European Investment Bank (EIB) and co-financier(s) (co-financing with AFD is envisaged), the outputs on land mapping/planning, seed systems and food safety will be complementary to the 'Liberia Rice Value Chain Project', comprising a loan (up to EUR 20 000 000 from EIB, and EUR 15 000 000 from AFD) blended with EU technical assistance (11th EDF African Investment Platform): EUR 4 500 000), addressing the rice value chain in an integrated fashion.

In line with the Action's systemic and needs-based approach, the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) is continuing its market systems development approach established under its GROW programme³², an agri-business and investment advisory programme. GROW I focussed on agro-inputs as well as the cocoa and vegetables sub-sectors; GROW II (indicative EUR 8 800 000) will continue with the cocoa and expand towards the horticulture and cassava³³ sub-sectors. Under the Promoting Sustainable Partnerships for Economic Transformation - PROSPECT IV programme (EUR 5 200 000), SIDA will apply a similar approach to the poultry sub-sector, targeting un- and under-employment of Liberian youth in particular. Finally, SIDA's programme on village access roads (motor cycle tracks) and feeder road maintenance with community-based organisations may complement this Action in specific geographical areas. This connection between actions in specific locations equally applies to Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ's) ongoing regional programme on renewable energy as well as the EU's planned intervention on (renewable) energy under the 11th EDF.

Additional synergies will be developed with the rural components of the AFD-financed Recovery of Economic Activity for Liberian Informal Sector Employment (REALISE) project (EUR 8 800 000, in co-financing with the World Bank), supporting consumption-smoothing mechanisms as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic, community development plans as well as market linkages, notably through assisting cooperatives. Complementary to mainstreaming nutrition in this Action, Irish Aid has an ongoing focus on nutrition, incl. a planned programme on food systems transformation through the nutrition lens.

3.2 Indicative Activities

The seed systems and food safety interventions will focus on a few supply and value chains/commodities. So-called 'type' commodities will be identified/confirmed at the inception phase of the individual interventions and will likely comprise but not necessarily limited to: rice (domestic market, import substitution), fish (domestic market, with potential for export) and cocoa and/or coffee (potential for export). The selection of commodities under the land evaluation component of the intervention on land knowledge will be broader, to serve sector development priorities of the Government of Liberia.

³⁰ Including inland water.

³¹ Covering both crop and fish seeds.

³² <https://www.growliberia.com/>

³³ Including cassava opens doors for synergies with the on-going EU-funded Cassava Transformation Project (CASTRAP) under the WACOMP programme. CASTRAP equally uses a needs-based approach and is a pilot for the new TEI SSFSs approach.

The activities presented below are indicative. All outputs and activities are to be further elaborated and fine-tuned through concept notes and project proposals, collated through negotiated procedures (in case of direct award of grants), call for proposals (grants, in case of failed negotiations) or call for tenders (service contracts).

Activities relating to Output 1.1:

- 1.1.1 conduct nation-wide soil (incl. physico-chemical characteristics) and water survey and mapping
- 1.1.2 conduct nation-wide land suitability mapping for agri- and aquaculture³⁴ purposes (incl. irrigation potential)
- 1.1.3 develop an agro-ecological zoning/land use plan, with attention for farming-forestry-biodiversity trade-offs (and inclusion of major aggregation/processing/marketing etc. asset locations) as well as land use choices in view of the upcoming EU Deforestation Regulation, adopting a gender lens perspective
- 1.1.4 optimise land information for research, extension and business development and raise awareness about land/agro-ecosystem capacity along with traceability requirements of the upcoming EU Deforestation Regulation with stakeholders (farmers, communities, etc.)

Activities relating to Output 1.2:

- 1.2.1 produce and multiply breeder seeds into foundation seeds
- 1.2.2 establish protocols for seed certification (incl. field inspection)
- 1.2.3 establish/upgrade laboratories for functional seed/cutting testing
- 1.2.4 establish platform for multiplication of foundation into certified seeds, incl. support to outgrowers

Activities relating to Output 1.3:

- 1.3.1 adopt relevant regional and/or international standards associated with selected value chains
- 1.3.2 establish services for testing quality and safety of selected food products
- 1.3.3 equip laboratories with testing resources and deploy calibration and verification services for functioning
- 1.3.4 raise awareness about the traceability requirements of the upcoming EU Deforestation Regulation and support development of national traceability/sustainability schemes

Activities relating to Output 2.1:

- 2.1.1 establish extension models so that extension officers and trainers/model farmers can train farmers and facilitate their knowledge on nutrition-sensitive and climate- and ecosystem-smart food systems choices as well as their access to improved inputs and services, while adopting a gender responsive approach
- 2.1.2 develop mechanisms to (pre-)finance/facilitate producers' (incl. smallholders, notably women and youth) access to seeds and related inputs plus services (e.g. warehouse receipt system)
- 2.1.3 facilitate SME seed actors' business development (e.g. market research, production planning, seed processing/packaging/branding/promotion/sales) and their linkages with other value chain actors

Activities relating to Output 2.2:

- 2.2.1 develop food safety mechanisms along selected value chains for increased access to domestic and international markets
- 2.2.2 support private sector to meet EU sanitary and phytosanitary import standards and sustainability regulatory requirements
- 2.2.3 support community-based initiatives (with particular reference to women and youth) to improve food processing hygiene standards – incl. to reduce food losses and waste

Activities relating to Output 2.3:

- 2.3.1 facilitate dialogue between education institutions and food systems employers (farmers, fisherfolk, agri-/food businesses, etc.)
- 2.3.2 develop curricula suited to Liberia's food systems transformation (e.g. on nutrition-sensitive and climate- and ecosystem-smart practices) with relevant educational institutions.

Through ongoing political and development cooperation coordination amongst TEI partners, the EU will timely identify activities with a direct impact on the outputs of the EU action, so that synergies can be maximised and duplications avoided.

The commitment of the EU's contribution to the Team Europe Initiative to which this action refers, will be complemented by other contributions in a Team Europe approach. It is subject to the formal confirmation of each respective member's meaningful contribution as early as possible. In the event that the TEIs and/or these contributions do not materialise, the EU action may continue outside a TEI framework.

³⁴ To be checked at project proposal stage with World Bank project component on aquaculture: potential duplication of water resources assessment for aquaculture and aquaculture zoning activity.

3.3 Mainstreaming

Environmental Protection & Climate Change

Climate change and ecosystem concerns are at the heart of the EU's support to the Government of Liberia entities with responsibility for food systems. Notably, the ongoing preparatory study 'Planning for climate- and ecosystem-smart food systems growth' with MoA and related institutions is providing guidance on smart use of natural resources: governance, value chain activation (linkages), finance and innovation as well as inclusiveness (gender & youth considerations) are suggested as major pathways to make Liberia's food systems climate- and ecosystem-smart.

Outcomes of the EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment) screening (relevant for projects and/or specific interventions within a project): The EIA screening classified the action Category C (no need for further assessment).

Outcome of the CRA (Climate Risk Assessment) screening (relevant for projects and/or specific interventions within a project): The CRA screening concluded that this action is no or low risk (no need for further assessment).

Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls

As per the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Gender DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as G1. This implies that gender equality is a significant objective, as also expressed in Outcome 2 'ensure inclusive food value chain relevance and performance'. Respect of women's rights in access to land will receive particular attention. Moreover, sex-disaggregated data will be integrated into the logical framework.

Human Rights

Cognisant of Liberia's context, all interventions will have to be implemented with an emphasis on human rights, in particular those of women and youth, as well as sensitivity towards conflicts and their prevention. Respect of women's human rights in relation to access to land will receive particular attention. Also potential conflicts in interactions between commercial and smallholder farmers will be handled with care.

The country remains committed to ratifying human rights treaties and conventions it has signed. The Government of Liberia has made efforts to protect human rights and counter gender-based violence, among them the passage of: i) the Domestic Violence Act (2019), which criminalises sexual- and gender-based violence; ii) the Land Right Act (2018), which increases women's access to land and enhances economic empowerment and participation in community land ownership; iii) the Decent Work Act (2015), which ensures that women and men are equal before the law in terms of employment and that the increase of the minimum wage is not discriminatory across gender; and iv) the Local Government Act (2018), which protects women's participation in local governance and supports opportunities of leadership training for women and girls.

The Action will apply a human rights-based approach respecting its five working principles: i) applying all human rights for all; ii) meaningful and inclusive participation and access to decision-making; iii) non-discrimination and equality; iv) accountability and rule of law for all; and v) transparency and access to information supported by disaggregated data.

Disability

As per OECD Disability DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this Action is labelled as D0. This implies that inclusion of persons with disabilities is not the principal neither a significant objective. Nevertheless, the Action will support social inclusion of persons with disabilities in food systems. Liberia has ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in 2012, but is yet to ratify the Optional Protocol.

Democracy

Democracy is not included as a significant objective (with a dedicated specific objective). Nevertheless, participation, particularly of women and youth, and respecting the rights of those with less influencing power (e.g. smallholders versus commercial producers or processors) will be carefully considered and monitored.

Conflict sensitivity, peace and resilience

Cognisant of Liberia's context (history with civil conflicts), all interventions will have to be implemented with an emphasis on human rights, in particular those of women and youth, as well as sensitivity towards conflicts and

their prevention. The land mapping output is expected to contribute to improved land use planning, seeking to facilitate the reconciliation of potential trade-offs between alternative land uses.

Disaster Risk Reduction

The land mapping output is expected to contribute to improved land use planning, seeking to promote land use decisions for climate- and ecosystem-smart use of natural resources. The action is further contributing to the Sendai Framework and aligned with the National Adaptation Plan.

Other considerations if relevant

Specific objective 2, ‘ensure inclusive food value chain relevance and performance (seed and food safety systems)’ refers explicitly to inclusiveness, comprising women, youth and disabled.

3.4 Risks and Lessons Learnt

Category ³⁵	Risks	Likelihood (High/Medium/Low)	Impact (High/Medium/Low)	Mitigating measures
3	Replacement of the current dynamic and insightful leadership at MoA, reducing the likelihood of transformative, impactful interventions	High	High	Ongoing, regular, at times intensified dialogue with Government of Liberia leadership and individuals who influence this matter.
3/4	Lack of high political priority and clear policy support for the improvement of sector/food systems governance	Medium	High	Intensified policy and political dialogue on key issues and agreements. Engagement in the fisheries food systems conditioned on demand from high-level Government of Liberia and regular sector coordination meetings allowing for clear assessment of what other donors are contributing (e.g. World Bank (WB) in the fisheries sector).
3	Lack of buy-in from Government of Liberia entities concerned due to the limitation of financial and human resources in the State budget	Medium	Medium	High level engagement and empowering approach with Government of Liberia entities. Advocacy for increased and improved resources with those with decisive power on the State budget.
3	Reduced producers’ interest due to unpredictable land use rights, inadequate extension services and access to other inputs	Medium	Medium	Focus on partners that demonstrate the most capacity for roll out of and ability/willingness to invest in transforming practices. Advocacy on full implementation of land use rights.
2/3	Increased demotivation of producers due to lack of guaranteed markets for produce or poor access to those markets	Medium	Medium	Farmers to be equipped with knowledge and skills of managing food safety and quality to increase the competitiveness of their products and enhance market access. Market information system will be developed to provide information on available markets to farmers in real time.
2/4	Conditions for a vibrant, private-sector-driven value-addition	High	High	Engage dialogue with Government of Liberia bodies responsible for attracting

³⁵ The risk (category) can be related to 1-the external environment; 2-planning, processes and systems; 3-people and the organisation; 4-legality and regularity aspects; 5-communication and information.

	environment insufficient to attract investment			and facilitating investors, and implementing key reforms
2/3/5	Donor dependency syndrome uncondusive for transformative, long-term and large scale impact on Liberia's food systems and economic development	Medium	High	Focus on partners that demonstrate the most capacity and ability/willingness to invest themselves in transforming practices. Focus on political engagement at Ambassador level through joint TEI meetings, visits, and engagements with high-level government officials.
1	Global and regional downside risks on economy and budget due to COVID-19 flare-ups, on-going global supply chain disruptions and the ongoing Ukraine-Russia crisis	High	High	The Action will address some of the key concerns/risks, notably risk of reduced food security, by enhancing smallholders' access to farming inputs (crops and fish) and accompanying services as well as enhancing food safety of locally-processed produce ³⁶ .
2/3/4	Lack of political will, transparency and oversight	Medium	High	Effective policy solutions, including measures to enhance the transparency of procurement processes and prevent conflicts of interest, as well as measures to ensure enforcement and detection will be in place.
2/3	Human rights violation committed by private sector, such as practices from different actors that generate the degradation of the environment, of living and working conditions and granting concession to companies -land and territories	Medium	High	The Action will ensure that private sector is carrying out and implementing corporate social responsibility policies, supported by effective monitoring and accountability mechanisms and a 'Do not harm approach'. The Action will ensure that the private sector actors will implement the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, carry out human rights due diligence and prevent the use of child labour in their activity.

Lessons Learnt

The EU has ongoing investments in the cassava, rice, horticulture, fish (aquaculture and coastal), cocoa and coffee value chains and supports capacity strengthening (public sector governance support, public-private partnership facilitation, support to research and extension and TVET) of the actors involved.

The projects under the 11th EDF EU-Liberia agriculture programme (EULAP), with an overall objective of reducing poverty, increasing income and resilience against shocks in the rural areas and improving food and nutrition security in Liberia, were designed to target increased productivity, commercialisation and competitiveness of selected value chains. So far, however, EULAP projects have first and foremost delivered on increased productivity, much less on commercialisation and competitiveness aspects. Limited success on commercialisation applies to production, but equally to processing and other downstream value chain activities, encompassing value addition. Projects have also under-performed on market/trade linkages and establishing/strengthening connections between value chain agents, notably smallholder producers to other private operators along the chain. Said private sector operators (e.g. agro-input distributors, processors or buyers/exporters) are often constrained by limited finance/financing options and business development service provision themselves. As a consequence, the different value chain processes and actors are not properly interrelated, resulting in projects with little sustainability of effects generated and low impact overall. Further, most EULAP projects have used a sequential approach, spending considerable energy on creating and training farmer/community groups, often running out of time when working their way down the value chain,

³⁶ In line with short- and medium-term measures recommended in the ECOWAS-FAO-WFP (2022)'s key findings on the risk and impact of the Russian-Ukrainian crisis on food security in the ECOWAS region.

and mostly providing similar/the same support to all beneficiaries, disregarding variations in skills, distance to market, etc.

Therefore, this Action seeks a paradigm shift from a one-size-fits-all to a needs-based value chain approach, already piloted under the ongoing ACP-EU coffee value chain and cassava transformation (national component of regional West-Africa Competitiveness Programme - WACOMP) project, and to some degree also the DeSIRA integrated rice-fish project.

Furthermore, a major challenge is the inconsistency in the interventions and a lack of steering by national authorities with a food systems mandate. Therefore this Action comprises a programme on technical assistance to support public functions of Government of Liberia institutions, like MoA, NaFAA, LACRA, etc. However, given the ongoing funding from other donors and EU regional programmes, it is recommended that the EU support for marine resources (NaFAA) is limited to political engagements in preparation of a potential new protocol for the dormant Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement.

3.5 The Intervention Logic

Under the EU MIP 2021-27 for Liberia, two TEIs are pursued: ‘Safe and Sustainable Food Systems’ and ‘Forestry and Biodiversity’. These initiatives merge the aspirations of Government of Liberia and the EU, not only on jobs, growth and enhanced investments in the agriculture, fisheries and forestry sectors, but also on prosperity that is respectful of people and planet – valuing Liberia’s natural resources, notably its ecosystems and the many services these deliver.

Liberia is facing a myriad of challenges in terms of limited financial resources, weak institutional and sector governance, and weak implementation of policies. The whole agri-food system is characterised by missing linkages across entire value chains and is affected by the lack of farmers’ access to fundamental inputs and services, poor infrastructure, and market failures. A food systems approach would provide a long-term strategic framework to tackle the outlined challenges and to support Government of Liberia to play its role in leading the food systems transformation process.

The overall objective of this Action is to boost safe and sustainable food systems growth for enhanced food and nutrition security. Food systems cover a broad spectrum of (sub)sectors (e.g. tree crops, fisheries) and (sub)systems (e.g. seed system, food safety system). A number of issues are consistent across all the sectors concerned: governance, activation and strengthening of value chains as well as finance and innovation. Therefore, the intervention logic is structured around these pathways/pillars of action, considered levers for inclusive food systems transformation and growth.

- (i) Governance. Supporting Government of Liberia institutions in their mandates of policy development and implementation are essential in improving the enabling regulatory environment for food systems transformation. It is expected that a nutrition-sensitive, climate- and ecosystem-smart approach to value chain development will not only improve the productivity in the sector but also increase the overall food and nutrition security of the country. The action will thus ensure that decisions related to food systems can be based on up-to-date information and climate- and ecosystem-smart approaches. Market information and knowledge on land suitability for agri- and aquaculture purposes are cornerstones in planning. Implemented legislation on seed certification, as well as food safety (sanitary and phytosanitary measures), should enable private sector suppliers and service providers to respond to domestic and international market demand in said areas.
- (ii) Value chain activation and strengthening. Establishing and developing value chain linkages, vertical (from production to consumption) as well as horizontal (incl. advisory/extension and business development services), are essential to ensure that value chain actors combine technical know-how with business attitude in their activities. Strengthening value chain components that are weak/absent and training stakeholders involved are further building blocks towards effective and efficient value chains. Establishing an inclusive seed production and certification system for selected value chains will facilitate women’s and youth’s access to quality seeds with related inputs & services. Investing in food systems quality infrastructure, food safety training, as well as nutrition awareness across selected chains, particularly at processing and other value-addition stages, will boost food safety and nutritional value of food products, for the domestic and export market.
- (iii) Finance and innovation. Providing youth & women in all their diversity access to climate- & ecosystem-smart technologies (e.g. in seed and production systems selection), involving them in incubation of prototypes for scalability and directly sharing newly acquired information (e.g. on land suitability) with them, will enable these target groups to participate in food systems innovation. Incorporating evolving knowledge on agro-ecological systems that are fit for Liberia’s context into tertiary education curricula will increase the match between skills acquired and those required on the job market. Under this Action, however, finance aspects (e.g. in-kind facilitation of smallholders’ access to quality seeds) are a means to reach the Action’s objectives rather than being an objective in itself.

Climate change and ecosystem concerns are at the heart of the EU’s support to the Government of Liberia entities with responsibility for food systems. Assessing the suitability of land resources for food production purposes in different agro-ecosystems in Liberia is essential for smart use and governance of Liberia’s natural capital (not least forests and the ecosystem benefits derived from them). There is a direct link between climate and the choice of quality seeds. Further, nutrition will be mainstreamed to ensure that the entire food security spectrum is covered and nutrition, as well as food sovereignty, will provide guidance on selection of value chains and activities during the project proposal stage. Finally and cognisant of Liberia’s context, all interventions will have to be implemented with an emphasis on human rights and inclusion, in particular those of women and youth, as well as sensitivity towards conflicts and their prevention.

As this Action is an EU contribution to the TEI SSFSs, it is understood that, in line with the TEI SSFSs intervention logic, progress of projects financed under this Action will be regularly discussed at Heads of Cooperation (HoC)’s

meetings and will be subject to the annual joint Heads of Mission (HoM)'s and HoC's review processes, the findings of which will feed into the policy dialogue with Government of Liberia on food systems transformation. It is expected that the policy dialogue with Government of Liberia will be leading this Action, and that the interventions will have to be based upon a clear demand and engagement from/with Government of Liberia counterparts.

3.6 Logical Framework Matrix

This indicative logframe constitutes the basis for the monitoring, reporting and evaluation of the intervention.

On the basis of this logframe matrix, a more detailed logframe (or several) may be developed at contracting stage. In case baselines and targets are not available for the action, they should be informed for each indicator at signature of the contract(s) linked to this AD, or in the first progress report at the latest. New columns may be added to set intermediary targets (milestones) for the Output and Outcome indicators whenever it is relevant.

- At inception, the first progress report should include the complete logframe (e.g. including baselines/targets).
- Progress reports should provide an updated logframe with current values for each indicator.
- The final report should enclose the logframe with baseline and final values for each indicator.

The indicative logical framework matrix may evolve during the lifetime of the action depending on the different implementation modalities of this action.

The activities, the expected Outputs and related indicators, targets and baselines included in the logframe matrix may be updated during the implementation of the action, no amendment being required to the Financing Decision.

PROJECT MODALITY (3 levels of results / indicators / Source of Data / Assumptions - no activities)

Results	Results chain (@): Main expected results (maximum 10)	Indicators (@): (at least one indicator per expected result)	Baselines (values and years)	Targets (values and years)	Sources of data	Assumptions
Impact	Enhanced food and nutrition security	<p>1 Prevalence (%) of moderate or severe food insecurity in the population, by county and sex (SDG 2.1.2)*</p> <p>2 Prevalence (%) of stunting among children under 5 years of age, disaggregated by county and sex (SDG 2.2.1)*</p> <p>3 Annual growth rate (%) of real GDP per capita (SDG 8.1.1)*</p>	<p>1 18% (2018); 31% (2020)</p> <p>2 30% (2019)</p> <p>3 0% (2015), 1.2% (2017)</p>	<p>1 tbd</p> <p>2 tbd</p> <p>3 tbd</p>	<p>1 Liberia Comprehensive Food Security & Nutrition Survey (CFSNS);</p> <p>2 Liberia Demographic and Health Survey (DHS)</p> <p>3 Liberia Central Bank statistics</p>	<i>Not applicable</i>
Outcome 1	1 Food systems knowledge, regulatory environment and governance improved	<p>1.1 Progress towards fully functional food systems governing entities (strengthened capacities of MoA, CARI, LACRA and NaFAA on strategic planning, gender responsive budgeting, financial resource tracking, analytical work, etc.), per entity*</p> <p>1.2 Number of inclusive green economy (IGE) policy instruments adopted and/or implemented, disaggregated by category of document (OPSYS GreenEco core indicator)</p>	<p>1.1 tbd</p> <p>1.2 tbd</p>	<p>1.1 tbd</p> <p>1.2 tbd</p>	<p>1.1 Progress reports for the EU-funded intervention</p> <p>1.2 Test of strategies and policy documents</p>	<p>Presence of political will, transparency and oversight</p> <p>Current dynamic and insightful leadership at MoA persists</p> <p>Improvement of sector/food systems governance are a high political priority and receive clear policy support</p>
Outcome 2	2 Inclusive food value chains (staple & cash crops, fish) performance and market opportunities increased	<p>2.1 Average income (LRD/USD) of small-scale producers, by sex and age (SDG 2.3.2, GERF 1.1, GAP III)*</p> <p>2.2 Number of women with increased training, financial resources, technology or other resources for sustainable and safe food production, for family consumption or for productive uses (OPSYS GAP III core indicator)</p>	<p>2.1 tbd</p> <p>2.2 0</p>	<p>2.1 tbd</p> <p>2.2 tbd</p>	<p>2.1 Baseline and endline surveys conducted and budgeted by the EU-funded interventions</p> <p>2.2 Baseline and endline surveys conducted and budgeted by the EU-funded interventions</p>	<p>Conditions for a vibrant, private-sector-driven value-addition environment sufficient to attract investment</p>

Output 1 relating to Outcome 1	1.1 Land and market knowledge for planning and decision-making improved	1.1.1 Status of operationalisation of a web-based land information system developed with support of the EU-funded intervention (%) 1.1.2 Status of operationalisation of a market information system developed with support of the EU-funded intervention (%)	1.1.1 0 1.1.2 0	1.1.1 100 1.1.2 100	1.1.1 Reports from the subcontractors, infrastructure/equipment handover and inspection documents 1.1.2 Reports from the subcontractors, infrastructure/equipment handover and inspection documents	Government of Liberia entities concerned engage, despite limited financial and human resources in the State budget
Output 2 relating to Outcome 1	1.2 Laws and regulations related to establishing a viable seed sector developed/ revised/ implemented	1.2.1 Status of operationalisation of a sustainable seed production system for selected value chains developed with support of the EU-funded intervention (%) 1.2.2 Status of operationalisation of a sustainable seed quality control service system to determine quality and certified seeds for selected value chains developed with support of the EU-funded intervention (%)	1.2.1 0 1.2.2 0	1.2.1 100 1.2.2 100	1.2.1 Reports from the subcontractors, infrastructure/equipment handover and inspection documents 1.2.2 Reports from the subcontractors, infrastructure/equipment handover and inspection documents	Government of Liberia entities concerned engage, despite limited financial and human resources in the State budget
Output 3 relating to Outcome 1	1.3 Infrastructure and capacity of stakeholders for providing quality infrastructure services in food value chains improved	1.3.1 Number of national standards developed and made accessible to target value chain actors with support of the EU-funded intervention 1.3.2 Number of food quality assessment services that are deployed for value chain actors with support of the EU-funded intervention	1.3.1 0 1.3.2 0	1.3.1/1.3.2 tbd in function of value chains selected	1.3.1 Test of strategies and policy documents 1.3.2 Progress reports for the EU-funded intervention	Staff availability and capacity strength at NSL, incl. retainment of analysts on Government of Liberia payment roll Provisions for operational expenditure of the laboratories
Output 1 relating to Outcome 2	2.1 Producers' access to quality seeds/cuttings, related inputs & services for food value chains (staple & cash crops, fish) enhanced	2.1.1 Number of smallholders reached with EU supported interventions aimed to increase their sustainable production, access to markets and/or security of land, by sex and age (GERF 2.1)	2.1.1 tbd	2.1.1 tbd (40% women, 20% youth)	2.1.1 Progress reports for the EU-funded intervention	Producers are interested despite unpredictable land use rights, inadequate extension services and access to other inputs
Output 2 relating to Outcome 2	2.2 Food safety processes across food value chains (staple & cash crops, fish) enhanced	2.2.1 Number of value chain actors trained by the EU-funded intervention with increased	2.2.1 tbd 2.2.2 tbd	2.2.1 75% of those trained by the project	2.2.1 Pre- and post-training test reports	Well-established valued chains

		<p>knowledge and/or skills in food safety standards, good agriculture practices and EU regulations related to selected food value chains and products, by sex and age</p> <p>2.2.2 Number of food-based businesses ready to export with support of the EU-funded intervention</p>		<p>(20% women)</p> <p>2.2.2 50% of those trained by the project</p>	<p>2.2.2 Progress reports for the EU-funded intervention, corroborated by local trade data MoCI; rReports on National Food Law implementation</p>	<p>Producers and processors engage despite lack of guaranteed markets for produce or poor access to those markets</p>
<p>Output 3 relating to Outcome 2</p>	<p>2.3 Mechanisms for matching tertiary education and (private sector) job market demand in food value chains improved</p>	<p>2.3.1 Number of students enrolled in education with EU support: c) tertiary education – in agriculture, forestry and fisheries, by sex and age (GERF 2.36c)*</p> <p>2.3.2 Percentage (%) of labour skilled in agriculture/fisheries among personnel employed in relevant food (safety, technology, packaging, etc.) businesses, by sex and age*</p>	<p>2.3.1 0</p> <p>2.3.2 tbd</p>	<p>2.3.1/2.3.2 tbd (40% women, 40% youth)</p>	<p>2.3.1 Database of beneficiaries/participants</p> <p>2.3.2 Baseline and endline surveys conducted and budgeted by the EU-funded intervention</p>	<p>Interest from tertiary education institutions and employers, mostly private sector, to engage in intervention</p>

4 IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

4.1 Financing Agreement

In order to implement this Action, it is envisaged to conclude a Financing Agreement with the Republic of Liberia.

4.2 Indicative Implementation Period

The indicative operational implementation period of this Action, during which the activities described in section 3 will be carried out and the corresponding contracts and agreements implemented, is 72 months from the date of entry into force of the Financing Agreement.

Extensions of the implementation period may be agreed by the Commission's responsible authorising officer by amending this Financing Decision and the relevant contracts and agreements.

4.3 Implementation of the Budget Support Component

N/A

4.4 Implementation Modalities

The Commission will ensure that the EU appropriate rules and procedures for providing financing to third parties are respected, including review procedures, where appropriate, and compliance of the action with EU restrictive measures³⁷.

This Action comprises interventions on land resources suitability mapping, seed production and certification, as well as food safety (serving domestic and export markets), which will be implemented as grants (direct awards under direct and indirect management). Natural resources (including climate) concerns are directly addressed, while gender and youth as well as tertiary education considerations will be integrated in technical assistance programmes (service procurement) and the above-mentioned thematic programmes.

4.4.1 Direct Management (Grants)

4.4.1.1 *International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA)*

Grants (direct management)

(a) Purpose of the grant(s)

Improve land knowledge, concretely, build a soil and water information system, to facilitate planning and decisions on land use and management for sustainable food production and food systems governance (cf. Output 1.1, Section 3.1) – in line with 'Output – Land knowledge improved' (in the indicative budget/Section 4.6).

(b) Justification of a direct grant

Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, the grant may be awarded without a call for proposals to the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), member of CGIAR (Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research).

- Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, the recourse to an award of a grant without a call for proposals is justified because of the very specific and technical nature of the activities to be implemented. The implementing partner(s) has to be adapted to the specific challenges of Liberia's operational and governance context (weak private sector and enabling environment). Both criteria call for a specific type of beneficiary on account of its technical competence (e.g. soil and water survey/mapping and analysis), its high degree of specialisation

³⁷ www.sanctionsmap.eu. Please note that the sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying the sanctions regimes. The source of the sanctions stems from legal acts published in the Official Journal (OJ). In case of discrepancy between the published legal acts and the updates on the website it is the OJ version that prevails.

(including connection to reference laboratories) in accordance with Article 195 (f) of the Financial Regulation.

4.4.1.2 Africa Rice Centre (WARDA)

Grants (direct management)

(a) Purpose of the grant(s)

Strengthen seed production and certification systems for enhanced value chain performance of food value chains (Outputs 1.2 ‘seed regulatory framework fit for establishing a viable seed industry’ and 2.1 ‘enhanced producers’ access to quality seeds/cuttings, related inputs & services for food value chains (staple & cash crops, fish) – in line with ‘Output – Seed systems strengthened’ (in the indicative budget/Section 4.6).

(b) Justification of a direct grant

Under the responsibility of the Commission’s authorising officer responsible, the grant may be awarded without a call for proposals to Africa Rice Centre (WARDA), member of CGIAR.

- Under the responsibility of the Commission’s authorising officer responsible, the recourse to an award of a grant without a call for proposals is justified because of the very specific and technical nature of the activities to be implemented. The implementing partner(s) has to be adapted to the specific challenges of Liberia’s operational and governance context (weak private sector and enabling environment). Both criteria call for a specific type of beneficiary on account of its technical competence, its high degree of specialisation (incl. access to network of banks with propagation material) in accordance with Article 195 (f) of the Financial Regulation.

4.4.2 Direct Management (Procurement)

Procurement of services (direct management):

Technical assistance to ensure effective nutrition-sensitive as well as climate- and ecosystem-smart food systems governance – to Government of Liberia institutions with food systems mandates (such as MoA, NaFAA, LACRA, CARI) – in line with ‘Objective – Effective food systems governance’ (in the indicative budget/Section 4.6).

4.4.3 Indirect Management with an entrusted entity

A part of this Action may be implemented in indirect management with UNIDO. This implementation entails establishing/strengthening quality infrastructure services and standards for selected food value chains (Output 1.3/Section 3.1) and enhancing food safety and quality across food value chains (staple & cash crops, fish) (Output 2.2 /Section 3.1) – in line with ‘Output – Food safety strengthened’ (in the indicative budget/Section 4.6).

The envisaged entity has been selected using the following criteria:

- strong track record in food safety, particularly in working on quality infrastructure with government institutions
- experience on food safety in working with private sector (MSMEs)
- experience on food safety in the West Africa sub-region, experience in Liberia an asset.

In case the envisaged entity would need to be replaced, the Commission’s services may select a replacement entity using the same criteria. If the entity is replaced, the decision to replace it needs to be justified³⁸.

4.4.4 Changes from indirect to direct management mode (and vice versa) due to exceptional circumstances (one alternative second option)

Section 4.4.1.1

Indirect management with an entrusted entity

³⁸ It is reminded that, during the implementation of the action, in case it is decided to select another entity, the same criteria may be used for justifying such selection, without going through a substantial modification of the Financing Decision. Consequently, beyond the justifications provided for selecting a given entity, it is important to define clear selection criteria.

The part of the action under the budgetary envelope reserved for grants may, partially or totally and including where an entity is designated for receiving a grant without a call for proposals, be implemented in indirect management with an entity, which will be selected by the Commission's services using the following criteria:

- track record in soil and water survey and mapping for land constraints/suitability mapping
- capacity to coordinate soil and water monitoring and field campaigns, including capacity building
- capacity to develop procedures for soil analysis and connect with reference laboratories (in Africa)
- capacity to develop the technical infrastructure for land information systems aligned to user needs
- implementation record in the West Africa sub-region, experience in Liberia an asset.

Section 4.4.1.2

Indirect management with an entrusted entity

The part of the action under the budgetary envelope reserved for grants may, partially or totally and including where an entity is designated for receiving a grant without a call for proposals, be implemented in indirect management with an entity, which will be selected by the Commission's services using the following criteria:

- technical expertise in seed systems development (staple & food crops, fish), for public and private sector
- access to (network of) regional banks with propagation material
- implementation record in food value chains in the West Africa sub-region, experience in Liberia an asset.

Section 4.4.3

If negotiations with the above-identified entity or replacement entity for indirect management with an entrusted entity fail for circumstances beyond the Commission's control, the Commission's services may use direct management as follows.

Grants (direct management)

(a) Purpose of the grant(s)

Establish/strengthen quality infrastructure services and standards for selected food value chains (Output 1.3/Section 3.1) and enhance food safety and quality across food value chains (staple & cash crops, fish) (Output 2.2 /Section 3.1) – in line with 'Output – Food safety strengthened' (in the indicative budget/Section 4.6)

(b) Type of applicants targeted

In order to be eligible for a grant, the applicant(s) must:

- be a legal person; and
- be a specific type of organisation such as: non-governmental organisation, international organisation, social enterprise, (international) public sector operator/organisation, public and private universities;
- be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the action with the co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies), not acting as an intermediary.

4.5 Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement and grants

The geographical eligibility in terms of place of establishment for participating in procurement and grant award procedures and in terms of origin of supplies purchased as established in the basic act and set out in the relevant contractual documents shall apply, subject to the following provisions.

The Commission's authorising officer responsible may extend the geographical eligibility on the basis of urgency or of unavailability of services in the markets of the countries or territories concerned, or in other duly substantiated cases where application of the eligibility rules would make the realisation of this action impossible or exceedingly difficult (Article 28(10) NDICI-Global Europe Regulation).

4.6 Indicative Budget

Indicative Budget components	EU contribution (amount in EUR)	Third-party contribution, in currency identified
Implementation modalities – cf. section 4.4		
Objective – Food systems knowledge, regulatory environment and governance improved		
Procurement (direct management) – cf. section 4.4.2	4 500 000	
Output 1.1 – Land knowledge improved		
Grant (direct management) — cf. section 4.4.1.1	4 000 000	
Objective – Inclusive food value chains performance and market opportunities increased		
Outputs 1.2 & 2.1 – Seed systems strengthened		
Grant (direct management) – cf. section 4.4.1.2	6 500 000	
Outputs 1.3 & 2.2 – Food safety enhanced		
Indirect management with an entrusted entity – cf. section 4.4.3	7 000 000	
Grants – total envelope under sections 4.4.1	10 500 000	
Procurement – total envelope under section 4.4.2	4 500 000	
Evaluation – cf. section 5.2 Audit – cf. section 5.3	may be covered by another Decision	
Contingencies	0	
Totals	22 000 000	

4.7 Organisational Set-up and Responsibilities

<p>Government of Liberia will provide strategic directions for the overall implementation of the programmes/projects included under this Action. The Government of Liberia coordination will be facilitated through the Aid Management Coordination Unit (AMCU) of the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, in close consultation and coordination with the line institutions concerned (notably MoA, NaFAA, LACRA, CARI, MoCI – NSL).</p> <p>Each individual project/contract will have a Steering Committee to discuss progress at regular intervals. Implementing partners will brief so that EU Delegation and Government of Liberia line institutions along with major stakeholders can provide guidance.</p> <p>As part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union, the Commission may participate in the above governance structures set up for governing the implementation of the action and may sign or enter into joint declarations or statements, for the purpose of enhancing the visibility of the EU and its contribution to this action and ensuring effective coordination.</p>

5 PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

5.1 Monitoring and Reporting

The day-to-day technical and financial monitoring of the implementation of this Action will be a continuous process, and part of the implementing partner's responsibilities. To this aim, the implementing partner shall

establish a permanent internal, technical and financial monitoring system for the action and elaborate regular progress reports (not less than annual) and final reports. Every report shall provide an accurate account of implementation of the action, difficulties encountered, changes introduced, as well as the degree of achievement of its results (Outputs and direct Outcomes) as measured by corresponding indicators, using as reference the logframe matrix.

The Commission may undertake additional project monitoring visits both through its own staff and through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission for independent monitoring reviews (or recruited by the responsible agent contracted by the Commission for implementing such reviews).

Roles and responsibilities for data collection, analysis and monitoring:

It is envisaged that the monitoring and reporting of this Action will be implemented through the technical assistance under this Action. This will imply fine-tuning the logframe and establishing a baseline for this Action.

In consultation with Government of Liberia and TEI partners, implementing partners of individual projects/contracts will define logical frameworks during the preparation/inception phase of said contracts, so that formulated results and selected indicators match the overarching Action logframe and TEI joint intervention logic (incl. indicators). Monitoring and reporting of individual projects/contracts will be the responsibility of the implementing partners selected.

Likewise, all monitoring and reporting shall assess how the Action is considering the principle of gender equality, the human rights-based approach and rights of persons with disabilities, including inclusion and diversity. Indicators shall be disaggregated at least by sex.

5.2 Evaluation

Having regard to the nature of the action, a mid-term or final evaluation may be carried out for this Action or its components via an implementing partner.

In case a mid-term evaluation is envisaged: it will be carried out for problem-solving and learning purposes, in particular with respect to sharing lessons learned with the partners of the Action or of individual projects, and consistently feeding subsequent Actions under the TEI SSFSs.

In case a final or ex-post evaluation is envisaged: it will be carried out for accountability and learning purposes at various levels (including for policy revision), taking into account in particular the fact that this and subsequent Actions formulated under the TEI SSFSs are intended to be transformative.

In case an evaluation is not planned, the Commission may, during implementation, decide to undertake such an evaluation for duly justified reasons either on its own decision or on the initiative of the partner.

The evaluation reports may be shared with the partners and other key stakeholders following the best practice of evaluation dissemination. The implementing partner and the Commission shall analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and, where appropriate, apply the necessary adjustments.

In addition, all evaluations shall assess to what extent the Action is taking into account the human rights-based approach as well as how it contributes to gender equality and women's empowerment and disability inclusion. Expertise on human rights, disability and gender equality will be ensured in the evaluation teams.

5.3 Audit and Verifications

Without prejudice to the obligations applicable to contracts concluded for the implementation of this action, the Commission may, on the basis of a risk assessment, contract independent audit or verification assignments for one or several contracts or agreements.

6 STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

The 2021-2027 programming cycle will adopt a new approach to pooling, programming and deploying strategic communication and public diplomacy resources.

In line with the 2022 ‘Communicating and Raising EU Visibility: Guidance for External Actions’, it will remain a contractual obligation for all entities implementing EU-funded external actions to inform the relevant audiences of the Union’s support for their work by displaying the EU emblem and a short funding statement as appropriate on all communication materials related to the actions concerned. This obligation will continue to apply equally, regardless of whether the actions concerned are implemented by the Commission, partner countries, service providers, grant beneficiaries or entrusted or delegated entities such as UN agencies, international financial institutions and agencies of EU member states.

However, action documents for specific sector programmes are in principle no longer required to include a provision for communication and visibility actions promoting the programmes concerned. These resources will instead be consolidated in Cooperation Facilities established by support measure action documents, allowing Delegations to plan and execute multiannual strategic communication and public diplomacy actions with sufficient critical mass to be effective on a national scale.

Appendix 1 REPORTING IN OPSYS

A Primary Intervention (project/programme) is a coherent set of activities and results structured in a logical framework aiming at delivering development change or progress. Identifying the level of the primary intervention will allow for:

Articulating Actions or Contracts according to an expected chain of results and therefore allowing them to ensure efficient monitoring and reporting of performance;

Differentiating these Actions or Contracts from those that do not produce direct reportable development results, defined as support entities (i.e. audits, evaluations);

Having a complete and exhaustive mapping of all results-bearing Actions and Contracts.

Primary Interventions are identified during the design of each action by the responsible service (Delegation or Headquarters operational Unit).

The level of the Primary Intervention chosen can be modified (directly in OPSYS) and the modification does not constitute an amendment of the action document.

The intervention level for the present Action identifies as:

Contract level		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Single Contract 1	Procurement (services) TA 'Effective food systems governance'
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Single Contract 2	Grant 'Land knowledge improvement'
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Single Contract 3	Grant 'Seed systems strengthening'
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Single Contract 4	Contribution agreement 'Food safety strengthening'